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SUBJECT: ANKARA MEDIA REACTION REPORT
WEDNESDAY, APRIL 30, 2003

THIS REPORT WILL PRESENT A TURKISH PRESS SUMMARY UNDER THREE
THEMES:

HEADLINES
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HEADLINES

MASS APPEALS
US troops attempt to search Red Crescent convoy for arms -
Sabah
Gul to Esad: If the US leaves the region there will be chaos-
Milliyet
US apologizes for Turkish Special team issue-Hurriyet
Bullets against stones: 18 dead in Iraq-Turkiye
Syria wants to open up toward the west through Turkey-Sabah
FM Gul conveys important messages from US to Syria-Hurriyet
Turkey is the mediator between the US and Syria-Star
Doves and Hawks' views will clash at NSC today-Sabah
Government's NSC test-Milliyet

OPINION MAKERS
US troops open fire on civilians-Radikal
FM Gul improves relations with Syria-Radikal
Turkey acts as mediator in the Middle-East-Cumhuriyet
Protest against US turned into a massacre-Cumhuriyet
Warm welcome to FM Gul from Syria-Zaman
Economy does not need another NSC crisis-Zaman
Markets closely watch the NSC meeting-Cumhuriyet

BRIEFING

Iraq: "Hurriyet" runs a front page story from last week when an American officer in Iraq, Colonel Bill Mayville, told journalists that Turkish special teams trying to smuggle arms to Kirkuk were caught by US troops and expelled from Iraq. Ankara rejected the allegations for arm smuggling, and reiterated that they were security guards responsible for the security of the Turkish Aid convoy. Ankara further stated that the US headquarters in Erbil had been notified about the convoy and the guards, in advance. The incident caused tension in Ankara, and US Ambassador Robert Pearson conveyed US administration's apologies to MFA. Moreover, US General Colby Broadwater passed his regrets to his Turkish counterparts. Although, FM Gul stated that Turkish special forces ensure the security for convoys carrying aid to Iraq from Turkey, last week, a Red Crescent convoy was accompanied by US troops instead of the Turkish special forces. This shows that Turkey has stepped back and had left the responsibility to the Americans. And the Turkish troops accompany only the convoys carrying logistic needs of Turkish troops in Northern Iraq. According to "Hurriyet", after the incident last week, US has asked the Peshmerge militants to leave Mosul and Kirkuk, and this proves that the US pays attention to Turkey's complaints about the Peshmerge militants.

FM Gul Visit to Syria: All papers and TV channels cover Foreign Minister Gul's day trip to Syria yesterday. "Milliyet" reports that Gul has offered to mediate between the US and Syria to defuse the tensions between the two countries. The Damascus administration gave Gul the green light to mediate for them, and he has received a warm welcome from Syria. "Milliyet" notes that Turkey and Syria have different views about the future of Iraq. Syrian FM Shara addressed the coalition forces in Iraq as occupiers and wanted them to leave Iraq immediately. However, FM Gul, in reply to this statement, said that this would lead to

chaos in the region, and Turkey wanted a broad-based, democratic government in Iraq.

NSC meeting: All papers report that all eyes - including the market's - were turned to today's NSC meeting. "Milliyet" reports that the government will face a test at today's meeting. Chief of General Staff General Hilmi Ozkok held a meeting with army officials yesterday evening and agreed to warn the AKP government to avoid policies encouraging fundamentalism.

EDITORIAL OPINION:

- a) US policy for the post Saddam era
- b) SARS epidemic

"The new type of war"
Hadi Uluengin commented in mass appeal Hurriyet (4/30): "A new type of war began as of September 11, 2001, and the US is going to pursue this war according to its own ethical parameters. It may sound a bit odd, but the fact of the matter is that the US has no imperialist spirit as evidenced in its history. Historically, imperialism has never taken root in the US. On the contrary, America has always been the champion of anti-colonialism. . Yet this policy shifted a little bit as of the late 19th century due to US policies in Cuba, Haiti, and the Philippines, which can be described as a kind of imperialism. However, overall US policy has generally been defined as 'isolationist' as well as 'anti-colonial.' The so-called American imperialism was really the result of US 'realpolitik' forced on the Americans by the Cold War. Thus, the argument about US imperialism is inappropriate in the case of Iraq."

"Is Turkey going to wait until SARS hits the country?"
Hakki Devrim noted in liberal-intellectual Radikal (4/30): "Turkey is preoccupied with its internal political debates and angst, and all eyes are watching the upcoming National Security Council meeting to see the nature of the tiff between ruling politicians and the military over the secularism issue. However, there is a very important issue that we tend to ignore. Scientists are warning us about the SARS epidemic, which might infect up to 1 billion human beings around the globe over the next year. . Now is the very time to categorize the countries around the world, noting those that are taking sensible and immediate precautions, and the others which are avoiding the reality. . Observing press coverage as well as reactions from health specialists, I am not optimistic about Turkey's record. There is no sign of panic or even worry. Are we going to take action only after the epidemic hits the nation? I wonder."

PEARSON